YALE MEN IN LITERATURE.

WHY HARVARD'S RECORD HAS ECLIPSED YALE'S IN LETTERS.

Yale Has Names on Her Roll That Stand for Literary Excellence, but She Has Been Indifferent to Such Men as Mitchell and Linton — Undergraduate Work To-day.

NEW HAVEN, April 13.—"It may be true, as ex-Gov. Chamberlain says," remarked one of the literary members of the present senior class, "that the Yale faculty is absolutely deficient in the literary sense, but the Yale undergraduates of the past few years have been aware of an increased literary spirit among the students themselves. This awakening is illustrated in a number of ways—even in the larger attendance of the much despised courses. It shows itself not only in an increased interest in general literature, but in honest and frequently successful work in original production. These writings find their way both into the undergraduate publications and the great magazines of the outside world, such as the *Century*, *Harper's*, the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *Forum*. A larger number of Yale graduates, too, find their way into literary pursuits. A canvass of the most successful writers of to-day, among the younger set, would discover a fair sprinkling of Yale men.

"There would be no sense in making a special point of these facts were it not that the world, up to the present time, has declined to view seriously the literary productions of Yale. The reason, I take it, why Mr. Chamberlain's remarks provoked such general interest was that they echoed a prevailing public sentiment. I hardly believe that a similar attack upon the literary department of Harvard would have occasioned more than a temporary flurry. The literary prestige of Harvard has been unquestioned for many years, and has been acknowledged most heartily, perhaps, by Yale men themselves. The fact that the most enduring works of American literature were produced within a stone's throw of Harvard sufficiently accounts for this attitude. We cannot forget that Longfellow and Lowell and Holmes were professors at Harvard, that Emerson and Thoreau were graduates, that Hawthorne and Whittier came immediately beneath its influence, and are for all practical purposes members of the Cambridge school. The only real productive period in American literary history has become identified with Harvard University, with sufficient reason.

"The inevitable tendency to compare Yale with Harvard has had a disastrous effect when we consider the question of literature. To offset the splendid Cambridge galaxy the best we can do is to bring forth the early American trio, Joel Barlow, John Trumbull, and Timothy Dwight the first—the Timothy whose name and productions were such a source of amusement to Lord Byron; or a little later, James G. Percival, 'our own Percival,' whom Lowel treated so disrespectfully, greatly to the irritation of Yale men; N. P. Willis, Donald G. Mitchell, James Fenimore Cooper, and Edmund C. Stedman. The glory of the two latter is somewhat diminished by the fact that they were both expelled before the completion of their college course.

"It is therefore plain why Yale has never enjoyed the reputation of being a literary centre. Her graduates have gone in for the more serious aspects of life and literature—have distinguished themselves in the learned professions and in public life. But literature, up to a very recent day, has been practically ignored at the New Haven university. Mr. Stedman's relation, at a recent meeting of the Yale alumni, of his experiences with the sole English professor of his day, the venerable Dr. Larned, was an interesting commentary on this fact. His most vivid recollection of his early instructor in English literature, said Mr. Stedman, was that he had a strong aversion to poetry, and did all he could to cool the latter's youthful ambition in that direction. The apathy of Yale toward the literary material at her very doors also forms a suggestive contrast with the way Harvard has treated her distinguished graduates. Mr. Donald G. Mitchell is a conspicuous case in point. For over forty years Mr. Mitchell has lived at Edgewood almost within hailing distance of Yale, and yet his presence has been practically ignored. He was honored with an LL. D., to be sure, in 1878, and has delivered a few lectures before the university, but he has never been invited to a professor's chair. Thirty years ago an offer of this kind would have come very gracefully from Mr. Mitchell's alma mater, and would have unquestionably been favorably entertained, but the idea seemed to occur to no one.

"Another, still more remarkable instance of blindness to a golden opportunity is illustrated in the case of William James Linton, who died a few months ago. Here was a man who had been the close friend and companion of the most distinguished men of the century, such as Mazzini, Ruskin, Walter Savage Landor, Victor Hugo, Lamennais, George Sand, Walt Whitman, Thomas Carlyle, Thackeray, Douglas Jerrold, Leigh Hunt, George Henry Lewes, and others. Besides his literary efforts, in prose and verse, which would fill over seventy volumes, he for over sixty years was the acknowledged greatest wood engraver of his time, and one of our most accomplished art critics. Yet Mr. Linton lived for thirty years within three miles of Yale, and was never invited even to lecture before the university. Think how priceless, for example, his services would have been to the art school. Is it conceivable that Mr. Linton could have lived so long in Cambridge and been disregarded in this way?

"It would seem as though our reputation for literary obtuseness were justified. Through all this indifference on the part of the powers that be, however, there has been an undercurrent of interest among the undergraduates in the study of literature. In the matter of undergraduate publications, for example, Yale has set the pace for all other colleges. I suppose we shall never tire of calling attention to the fact that the *Yale Literary Magazine* has been in continuous existence since 1836, and that it is, therefore, not only the predecessor of all collegiate periodicals, but the oldest magazine published in America. The *Lit.* has always been greatly revered at Yale, and for over half a century its editors have occupied a lofty position in the estimation of the college world. A majority of its editors usually creditably endure the supreme test of undergraduate success—an election to a senior society—and the Chairmanship of the *Lit.* is one of the surest 'pulls' for Bones. In its literary quality the *Lit.* has been generally heavy and painfully scholastic, with a too perceptible smacking of Poole's Index and the like. The *Lit.* prize essay, for several college generations, has been about as dull and stilted a production as you could ask.

"During the past two or three years, however, the standard of *Lit.* writing has wonderfully improved. The traditional subjects, such as 'The Genius of Shelley and Byron Compared,' 'The Religion of "In Memoriam,"' &c., have given place to light, suggestive sketches of college and every-day life. The modern growth of the short story has had a powerful effect upon the *Lit.*, and the poems have been more spontaneous and graceful. We, of course, do not look for originality in the pages of the *Lit.* to-day. Even as college life itself is a reflex of the great life of the world, so the *Yale Lit.* is a microcosm of the world's literary activity. Its mood changes with the mood of the external world as regularly as clockwork. The successful novelist or essayist is as sure to find his imitators among the undergraduate writers for the *Lit.* as he is among their more pretentious contemporaries. A few years ago it was Bret Harte and Augustine Birrell; now it is Anthony Hope and Richard Harding Davis, with an occasional dash of Kipling. In spite of this inevitable tendency to imitation, the writing in the *Lit.* is frequently creditable, and is improving every day. The improvement during the past two or three years has been so evident as to cause general comment. Now, I am sure, the average Yale man subscribes to the *Lit.* as a pleasure, whereas a few years ago he subscribed to it as a duty.

"The other purely literary publication, the *Yale Courant*—for we may leave out of consideration the *Record*, which is a humorous illustrated weekly, and the *News*, which is a daily newspaper—has improved to an even more marked degree. Even graduates of three or four years' standing will be surprised at the information that the *Courant* occupies a really respectable position in the estimation of college men; that it is no longer the butt of undergraduate ridicule. It took a good deal of hard work and a large amount of pluck to pull the *Courant* out of its hole, but it has been done. The *Courant* is another interesting illustration of the fact that undergraduate writing is a reflex of the literary world. Its size has been reduced, several colors of ink are used in the printing, and in every way it is one of the countless followers of the style instituted by the *Chap-Book*. The change has been a good thing for the *Courant*, for it has established for itself a position at Yale; and collegians no longer inquire, as they used to a few years ago, why is the *Courant* published? A recent departure of the *News* is another indication of the prevalent interest in undergraduate writing. It now reviews carefully each number of the *Lit.*, criticising impartially every article and poem, and comparing the number to those published previously during the year. The criticisms are generally read, and form the subject of many an evening's discussion. The result must inevitably be that when the election of *Lit.* editors arrives, the class will have a much clearer notion of the literary abilities of the various candidates than was possible before.

"The improvement in the college publications is not the only indication of a growing literary spirit at Yale. The intercollegiate debates and our success against Harvard and Princeton would seem to indicate an improved facility in expressions. The libraries, too, are patronized more and more every year. The time is passing when a Yale undergraduate can refer to Charles III. as one of the Kings of England, as a member of my class did once, and when the great English masterpieces shall be sealed volumes. In this literary awakening, for so I may fairly call it, too much credit cannot be given to Prof. Phelps, who is especially interested in undergraduate writing. He has a large number of men working for the *Lit.* under his personal supervision; he suggests subjects, reads and criticises their articles before they are submitted and helps them on in a variety of ways. In his courses to the students Prof. Phelps's ambition is to make readers of the young men, rather than critics. And in this capacity he is of especial service to the university. Yale men are reading to-day as they never did before Prof. Phelps became an instructor at the college."

THE DARKY'S GAME OF CRAPS.

It Originated Just After the Civil War, When the Darky Had Idle Time—His Favorite Names for Some of the Throws of the Dice—Why He Takes to the Game Above All Others.

The Southern negro trusts fortune with all the blind faith of a little child. He carries a buckeye for sore eyes, a potato for rheumatism, a wisp of hair from the tail of a black dog for pains in the back, a voodoo charm to protect him against the machinations of his enemies, and a rabbit's foot for luck. With this collection in his pocket, he goes confidently forth to woo the fickle goddess Chance. But not in cards or in twirling wheels or in any of the devices known to the devotee of Monte Carlo does he put his trust, and not even the great American game of poker has any fascination for him. But in craps, played in his own remarkable way, he delights.

This game is especially adapted to the needs of the negro and brings out in a minor way the theory of the eternal fitness of things. He lives in a warm climate, most of his time is spent out of doors, he has no clubs or privacy at home, since he usually shares one room with a numerous family. Therefore his gambling must be of a kind that can be done between jobs, and in any secluded spot where he may chance to find himself. For that reason the game of craps is exactly suited to his condition, for he does not need a table in order to play it or chairs to sit in. All he wants is a dark alley where he can squat and drop the dice upon the ground.

If the negro wishes he may lay claim to a time-honored precedent in the matter of fondness for dice. But he has not resurrected any musty old game of antiquity, and Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, who used dice centuries ago, would be alike puzzled if they could witness a game of craps as he plays it. Who invented it and when or where it originated no one can say, but soon after the close of the war, when the negro for the first time in his life could taste the sweets of idleness—and a delicious morsel it was and is—this alluring device for causing coins to change pockets started, and it spread like a contagious fever. To-day it is played all over the South, in the cotton fields, on the rice plantations, in the piny woods, on the steamboats and in the towns and cities. And the strange jargon of the game, the queer expression of the players, are everywhere the same. The Greeks named all the numbers on the dice after gods, goddesses and heroes, the lucky number being called Aphrodite, and the negro likewise has a name for every possible combination of numbers, although his are not so classical as those of the cultured Greeks. Three he calls "Free;" four, "Little Joe;" five, "Phoebe;" six, "Jimmy Hicks;" nine, "Liz," and ten, "Big Tom."

In the South it is now considered as much a matter of course that a negro will "shoot craps" as that he will eat watermelon, and no one except the hard-hearted guardian of the law attempts to interfere with his favorite pastime. In the cities you will find a group of negroes squatted upon the ground in alleys, in the rear of stores, and every out of the way nook where the ubiquitous policeman is not likely to obtrude himself, while pickaninnies, stationed as sentinels, are ready to give warning of the enemy's approach. The rules of the game are few and simple. The first player takes two dice and shaking them violently in the palm of his hand, calls out:

"A nickel—put up."

Another answers, "I fade you," which, being translated, means, "I cover your money."

The onlookers also take a hand in the betting, the one who bets with the player being said to "like him." Everything being in readiness, the player drops the dice as if they burnt him, crying:

"Come seben-eleben."

If he makes seven or eleven, he wins. If he throws the unlucky numbers two, three or twelve, he loses, or "craps out," but if any of the other combinations of numbers are turned he makes his "point," and has another throw. Now, the "fader" who has covered the player's money reaches out and picks up the dice with the announcement, "My dice." After making this statement he coolly proceeds to carefully examine them to see if they are loaded, and, satisfied on this point, hands them back to the player. This is allowable just after the first throw, but after this it is an insult to the player again to question their genuineness, and if it is done a fight is the result.

The player having scored a point the first time, the excitement becomes intense. The white teeth of all are shining, their eyes rolling until they seem like ovals of ivory set with a black bead and their heads commence to wag from side to side. The player holds his breath and not a word is spoken by those around him as he rattles the dice. It is the critical moment. If he can make his "point" before he throws seven he wins, but if seven comes first he is undone. The bettors surreptitiously run their hands in their pockets and feel for a rabbit's foot.

Suddenly the player blows upon the dice in his hand, gives a deep guttural grunt, and cries excitedly:

"Come to see me, little Joe." The "fader" keeps repeating:

"Cut him off, seben. Cut his throat, lucky seben. Jump under him, seben."

There is an exclamation from the "fader," a triumphant laugh from the player. He has made his point. There is an exchange of dirty nickels, and a grunt or two from the losers. The player is getting warmed up. He takes off his coat, rolls up his sleeves, and spits on his hands. Lovingly he fondles the dice; luck is with him. The spectators draw closer and watch with increased interest. By the rules of the game he will be allowed to throw until he "craps out," and, elated by his success, he shakes the dice and calls:

"A dime—come up with a dime."

With some grumbling the "fader" obeys. Those who have no money on the game chuckle at this doubling of the stakes, and those who are desirous of betting begin to search their pockets for nickels, some of them apparently having considerable difficulty in finding the required number. The player drops the dice, at the same time snapping the fingers of his other hand, a sure way of bringing luck, and again the money is his. The game now goes on quickly, and he wins again and again, until many of the bettors are compelled to drop out. Soon the hand of the player trembles as he reaches for the ivories, and he takes out his rabbit's foot and rubs it on them. He feels that he will never work again, that he will in the future trust to the spotted dice for a living, for surely he is fortune's favorite. The man who likes him is uttering exclamations of delight, the losers are surly and quarrelsome.

"Dat niggah was born in de full of de moon. He's bound to hab luck," some one prophesies, and the player smiles. As he drops the dice there are imploring cries of "Come seben-eleben," "Come twelve," "Two, free it is."

It is nine, and the thrower adds quickly:

"Liz is de gal fer me," a saying that always accompanies that throw. Once more the dice roll upon the ground and "Jimmy Hicks" is the throw.

"Big Six, take my gal to Memphis," the player entreats, for there are certain propitiatory expressions that must be used when these numbers are turned. The bettors crowd so close to him that he scarcely has room to move his arm, and their faces are bent almost upon the ground. One tall, ragged fellow, who has parted with his last nickel, stands disconsolately upon the outskirts of the circle, his hands in his empty pockets.

Suddenly there is a warning whistle from the sentinels, the player hastily transfers the dice to his mouth, thus stopping an oath, and a moment later when a policeman comes in sight he sees only an innocent-looking group of negroes strolling to meet him. But he eyes them suspiciously.

"What are you doing loitering here?" he asks.

They give him an impudent look that he is not slow to interpret. It means:

"You didn't cotch us do nothin', did yer?"

Since he cannot answer this in the affirmative, he merely commands gruffly:

"Move on."

And they shuffle off in silence, the game of craps postponed for another time.

The Voice of Truth.

From the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Wallace—The happiest hours of my life were when I was going to school.

Ferry—I cannot tell a lie. I must confess that my happiest hours came when school was over for the day.

An Icicle Victim Recovering.

From the Charleston Daily Gazette.

SEWELL, W. Va., April 11.—Lewis Hendricks, whose leg was broken in February by a huge icicle rolling down the coal incline and crushing him against the monitor, returned yesterday from the hospital at Paint Creek. He is still using crutches.

A KNOB COUNTRY MIX-UP.

NARROW ESCAPE FROM A LICKING OF UNCLE SI.

Narrow Escape from Worse Than Homicide of Reub—Untimely Appearance of Eli—Fate of Black Dick—Advantages of an Unlimited Supply of Bears When Neighbors Quarrel.

MILFORD, Pa., April 15.—"I sot the gun down in the corner," said the man from the Knob country, "and didn't think no more about it. I knowed Reub and Eli had been at the outs and was havin' it hot and heavy now and then, and I says to Reub's wife:

"'Has it been fixed up yit?'

"And Reub's wife says: 'Has what been fixed up?'

"'The row 'twixt Reub and Eli,' I says.

"'Oh!' she says. 'No. Not yit. Fact is,' she says, 'it's goin' sassier 'n ever.'

"I says: 'I want to know!'

"'Yes,' she says. 'Eli was pokin' 'round here only to-day,' she says, 'and him and Reub had it to make your hair raise,' she says. 'Reub he swore to Eli that if he didn't keep away and quit pokin' 'round here he'd fix him the way he didn't want to be fix'd,' she says, 'and Eli swore to Reub that he'd poke 'round wherever he durned pleased, and whenever he pleased, and that when there was any fixin' to be done he'd have a hand in it,' she says. 'They both on 'em snapped and snarled, and I says to 'em that it'd save a lot o' time and wind and noise if they'd pitch right in and have the hull thing out and done with it, no matter which'n got the worst of it,' she says, 'but it sort o' looked as if one on 'em was 'feared and t'other un dassn't, and they only fit with their jaws,' she says. 'Eli he mogged away after awhile, and Reub kep' hollerin' at him that if he come 'round here nosin' ag'in he'd fix him, sure as guns,' she says.

"'Did he act as if he was mad?' I says.

"'Who? Reub?' she says.

"'Yes,' I says.

"'Yes, he did,' she says. 'And the furder Eli got away the madder Reub got,' she says.

"I was on the p'int o' sayin' somethin' more, when 'Bang!' went somethin' out doors.

"'That's a gun!' says Reub's wife.

"'Sounded like one,' I says, startin' fer the kitchen.

"'And it went off in our orchard!' says she.

"'And,' I says, gittin' in the kitchen, 'it's my gun!' 'cause the gun was gone from the corner where I sot it.

"'Fore I could git out to see what it was thet was goin' on, Reub come in, carryin' my gun, and lookin' mighty glum, I tell you!

"'I been threatenin' him this here long time!' he says, settin' the gun back in the corner and floppin' down in a chair. 'I said I'd do it if he didn't quit nosin' 'round here, but I didn't 'tend to kill him. I only calc'lated on pepperin' of him so he wouldn't forgit it, and keep away from here,' he says.

"'Reub!' says his wife. 'You hain't gone and killed him!'

"'He's dead, Margaret Ann!' says Reub. 'He's deader'n Solomon, and I killed him!'

"Margaret Ann she flopped down in a chair and boo-hooed, and I ketched my breath and says:

"'Reuben,' I says, 'this is sad!'

"Reub he looked up a little s'prised, it seemed to me, and says:

"'Well, I won't go so fur as to say that, but it's onfort'nit. I'll say as much as that. It's onfort'nit,' says Reub.

"'Yes, and you'll be hung higher'n Haman!' says Margaret Ann, 'and what kind of a widder will I be then?'

"Reub was goin' to say somethin' snappy to Margaret Ann, but I shet him off, and says:

"'It can't be that!' I says. 'Course you done it in self-defence, Reuben?' I says.

"'Well, o' course I didn't!' says Reub. 'I done it 'cause I had threatened to do somethin' to him, but I didn't 'tend to kill him dead,' says he.

"'Didn't Eli have a gun, too?' I says. 'If he had a gun, too, that'll be in your favor,' I says.

"'I don't know whether Eli had a gun or whether he didn't!' says Reub, flarin' up and snappin'. 'If Eli ever did have a gun he stole it!'

"'Well,' I says, 'somethin's got to be done. We can't let him lay out there in the orchard. He's got to be took home,' I says.

"'Yes,' snittered Reub's wife, 'and his widder'll have standin' in the community,' she snittered, 'and your widder won't, 'cause you'll be hung!' she snittered, and flopped down and boo-hooed worse'n ever.

"'His widder!' hollered Reub. 'Whose widder?'

"'Eli's widder, o' course!' she snittered.

"Reub he looked first at me and then at Margaret Ann, and then it seemed as if he didn't know whether to bust out laughin' or to swear. He concluded to swear, and he done it amazin' for a minute or two. Then he cooled down a little and says:

"'Eli's widder!' he says. 'Be you both a-settin' here setch big fools as to think that it's Eli I been a-killin'?' he says. 'Not sayin' that I wouldn't, consarn him!' he says. 'I've killed somethin' worth a durn sight more than Eli! I've killed Black Dick!' he says. 'But I didn't 'tend to; I only 'tended to pepper him!' he says.

"Margaret Ann riz up and flounced outen that room quicker'n scat, and it seemed to me that she was disapp'inted. I knowed that Black Dick had been pesterin' Reub, and most everybody else 'round that neighborhood, ever sence he come in the deestrict, and I knowed that Reub had threatened to do somethin' to him if he didn't stay home and quit his pesterin'. Dick ought to been home, there wa'n't no question 'bout it; but his killin' was bound to make a muss, and I knowed it.

"'Reub,' I says, 'Uncle Si thought a good deal of Dick,' I says. 'He'll sock it to you!'

"'I know it,' says Reub. 'But I warned 'em! And I didn't 'tend to kill him,' he says.

"'Uncle Si wouldn't a took $40 fer that hog,' I says. 'He was the only Berkshire in the hull Knob country,' I says.

"'I know it,' says Reub, shakin' his head. 'I guess I'll go right down now and break the news to Uncle Si,' he says. 'He knows I warned him, and I'll show him that I didn't 'tend to kill him dead,' he said.

"I didn't see nothin' better that Reub could do to be neighborly, and I 'greed with him and said I'd walk down with him. So we went. Uncle Si lives more'n a miled, and him and Aunt Sairy was git in' ready for bed when me and Reub got there. They was more'n s'prised to see us, and Aunt Sairy was worried to wunst.

"'Reuben,' she says, 'is anybody sick to your house?'

"'No,' says Reub; 'worse'n that, Aunt Sairy.'

"'Reuben,' she says, 'you don't want to tell me that some o' your folks is dead!' she says.

"'No,' says Reub, ketchin' fer breath, 'but some o' your'n is dead!' he says. 'That is—leastways—Black Dick is dead!' he says, and was goin' on to tell how it happened, but Uncle Si guessed it. He sprung up an' hollered:

"'Consarn you, Reub, you've killed that Berkshire hog o' mine, that didn't have his likes in three counties!'

"And quicker'n a cat could paw a rat Uncle Si had Reub by the neck. He flopped him on his back and he whacked him till it sounded like splittin' wood. Then Reub he woke up, and him and Uncle Si had it up and down and round that kitchen till everything hummed—Aunt Sairy on a chair, screamin' and bellerin' and hollerin' fer 'em to quit, and me a standin' on the table to give 'em room, 'cause I thought it'd be better for all concerned to get rid of their steam by lickin' one another, if they could. While they was at it the thumpinest kind there come the all-firedest, piercin'est squealin' from to'ards the pigpen that any one ever heerd. Uncle Si heerd it to wunst. He broke loose from Reub, pantin' and puffin' and rumpled 'most as bad as Reub was, 'cept that one o' Reub's eyes was swelled shet and his nose was bleedin some.

"'There!' hollered Uncle Si, as good as he could with what breath he had. 'Black Dick is gone, and now some one is carryin' off that yearlin' shoat o' mine, the last pig I got!' he hollered, and he tore out o' the house to save his shoat.

"'Reub,' I says, 'we must help Uncle Si.'

"Reub swabbed his face and looked around as good as he could with one eye, and says:

"'Yes,' he says, 'under the circumstances it wouldn't be no more'n neighborly,' he says.

"'Fore we got out o' the house, though, Uncle Si come tearin' back, hollerin':

"'Sairy, it's a bear! It's a bear tryin' to lug off our shoat! Hurry up with the gun!'

"Aunt Sairy was so flustered yit over the rumpus 'twixt Uncle Si and Reub that 'tain't likely that she'd got the gun in time, but mine was standin' outside by the door, where I sot it when I come down with Reub, and I grabbed it and tore for the pen, with Uncle Si, Aunt Sairy and Reub follerin' on behind. Sure enough, there was a bear, and a good big one, tryin' his best to h'ist Uncle Si's shoat out o' the pen. I socked a bullet in his head and he tumbled dead in his tracks.

"'Your shoat's all right, anyhow, Uncle Si,' I says, 'and you've got a bear to salt down in place o' Black Dick,' I says.

"'Fore Uncle Si could say anything, 'Oo-o-o-o-f! oo-o-o-f! oo-o-o-f!' somethin' grunted off to'ard the barn, and lookin' that way, the moon shinin' bright 'most as day, what in Sam Hill do you s'pose we seen? Black Dick, by gravy! Black Dick his own self, big as life, and yit Reub had killed him up in his orchard not an hour before! Uncle Si and Aunt Sairy they clapped their hands and hollered fer joy, but Reub he was a sight. He cocked the eye that wasn't swelled shet at the bear, and I see it was full o' skeer.

"'It's Black Dick's spook, that's what it is!' he hollered. 'Black Dick's layin' up in my orchard, deader'n the bottom mack'ral in a bar'l!' he hollered, and away he tore fer home, as good as he could, with me a follerin', for I didn't know what mowt happen to Reub. Reub he stumbled along 'cross the fields, and I kep' at his heels. He p'inted right for his orchard fence.

"'If that consarned hog hain't layin' where I dropped him,' Reub says, 'then he's come to life and snuck home. If he is a layin' there, then what we seen down to Uncle Si's is his spook, and I'll be ha'nted all my life!' says he.

"We got to the fence. Reub, havin' only one well eye to see with, peeked over the fence kind o' sidelin', but I peeked over straight ahead. But Reub seen it jest as quick as I did. And I felt jest as skeery as Reub did when I seen it.

"'There he lays!' says Reub, shakin' and shiverin' and turnin' his one eye and lookin' behind him to see if anything was comin'. 'There's Black Dick's carcass jest where I dropped it! I knowed it! I've been licked like a tramp fiddler fer killin' that hog, and now I'm goin' to be ha'nted by its consarned spook!' he says, and he broke fer the house.

"I got over my skeer by and by and took to thinkin'. I clim the fence and snuck up to where the carcass laid. I hadn't no more than got there than I seen that if I'd only come out there 'fore I went with Reub to Uncle Si's I'd a saved Reub gittin' a lickin', and saved Uncle Si gittin' mussed up tol'able bad himself. It wasn't Black Dick that laid there. It was one o' the biggest bears that I ever saw. Reub had plugged him for sure, 'cause he didn't mean to, thinkin' it was Black Dick.

"'Now,' I says, 'I'll go in and tell Reub, and me and him and Margaret Ann 'll bust a laughin'.'

"I went in. Reub was sittin' on the settee, groanin' and cussin' his luck, and Margaret Ann was rubbin' him down with camphire and doin' him up in rags.

"'Reub!' I says, grinnin', 'your Black Dick out there in the orchard is a slammin' big, fat bear!' I says.

"Reub got the hull thing into his head to wunst, but he didn't bust out a laughin' as much as I thought he would. He sprung up, scatterin' Margaret Ann and the camphire and the rags.

"'It's a bear, is it?' he hollers. 'It ain't Black Dick after all, hay?' he hollers. 'Then I go back and walk all over Uncle Si!' he hollers. 'I go back and give Uncle Si the all-pervadinest whollopin' that ever fell on a man sence Samson pulled the pillars down!' he hollers, and 'fore we could stop him out he tore. But he didn't git to Uncle Si's. The first thing he run ag'in, right in his front yard, was Eli! Eli must a had an inklin' that somethin' was occurrin' at Reub's that night, and there he was, pokin' his nose in to see what was goin' on. Reub's steam was up, and he didn't waste no time. He yoked Eli, and in less'n a minute had broke up consid'able sod with him, and Eli hollered enough. He hollered enough, and swore that he'd never poke around there no more. Reub let him up and Eli slid.

"'There!' says Reub. 'That saved Uncle Si!'

"Then we went back in the house. Margaret Ann took up the camphire where she had left off, and when she got through Reub he says:

"'Margaret Ann,' he says, 'we've got a bear, and we've settled the little difficulty 'twixt me and Eli. You hain't goin' to be no widder, but you kin go over to the Eddy to-morrow and get the best alapacky dress they keep, and I'll pay fer it.'

"Then I wént home, and, as I look back at it now, seems to me as if that was about the most interestin' evenin' I ever spent in the Knob country."

NEW USE FOR ANTS.

Observations of a Naturalist Whom They Help in Preparing Specimens.

PITTSBURG, April 16.—Prof. Lafayette Bernard has returned from Florida with some artistically mounted snake skeletons and lots of stories about ants. His attention was first attracted toward ants by the discovery that they could be useful to him in his capacity as a collector of specimens. He had lamented the want of some method of preparing the skeletons of small animals for his private museum without wasting time that might be devoted to field work. One day while roaming in the pine woods of Florida he killed a fox squirrel, and as his specimen box was full he left the animal on the ground, intending to return for it later in the day. When he got back the flesh of the squirrel was gone, but a well-cleaned skeleton remained. A million ants scurried away as he approached, and he found that the little creatures had done his work for him. This labor-saving hint was not lost on him, and to the idea he put into execution are due the wonderful specimens of skeleton mounting for which he is noted.

As one enters the Professor's little museum one sees the skeleton of a rattlesnake coiled in the position assumed just before springing, the fangs protruding, the rattles slightly raised from the ground, as if sounding their alarm. This specimen is said to be the first ever mounted in the natural coil, the bony structure still held together by the real cartilage. Again, one sees the skeleton of a black snake coiled about the trunk of a small sapling, or that of a squirrel crouching on the limb of a tree, as if trying to shield itself from the eye of the sportsman, or that of a rabbit sitting on its haunches. Had it not been for Mr. Bernard's little friends the ants these groupings would have been impossible. The method is simple enough, when one knows how to apply it. The Professor's plan is to kill his specimen, bind it with wire in the position in which he wishes the skeleton to remain, and then places it near a group of ant-hills. The voracious insects do the rest. The operation requires careful watching, else the entomological dissectors might devour the cartilage that holds the bones together as well as the flesh. At the proper moment the Professor removes the specimen from the region of the ant hills, applies a preservative and hardening chemical to the cartilage, and when the bones have set removes the binding wires.

The innumerable ant hills that infest the neighborhood of De Land, Fla., were the scene of many experiments. It is well known that certain species of ants keep slaves that labor for the good of the commonwealth; that they even have their milch cows, a species of the aphis or tree louse. Prof. Bernard wanted to learn the relations the slaves bear to their masters, the method of enslaving, whether slavery among ants demoralizes the will and degrades the spirit as it does among men, and he set himself at work to find out all these things. One day he stood over a community composed of black ants, which were working industriously away polishing off the bones of a quail which some sportsman had shot and failed to find in the long wire grass. Suddenly he observed a dozen red ants, smaller than the black ones. They seemed to be some kind of advance guard, for after reconnoitring the black ant hill they scurried away to their own community, about 100 yards distant. The Professor followed and was rewarded by seeing a wonderful sight. The advance guard stopped every few minutes, apparently consulting squads of their fellows who were out foraging for food. The squads stopped in their tracks while the advance guard went on home and entered their hill. The sandy cone became alive. From all points red ants poured out and hurried to the black ant hill, the squads that had stopped when encountered by the advance guard joining the ranks of the invaders. As the army pushed forward the right and left wings advanced ahead of the main column, the whole body forming the concave side of a crescent. The horns of the crescent gradually closed, moved toward each other, until the enemy's camp was reached, when the crescent became a circle and the camp was surrounded. Then followed a battle. Hundreds of dead ants strewed the ground, red and black engaging in deadly combat. The red were superior in numbers and finally vanquished the black, looted their stores and compelled their prisoners to bear the stolen goods to the city of their conquerors. Twelve fat and sleek aphides were part of the booty that rewarded the prowess of the victors.

On another occasion Prof. Bernard dropped a dozen red ants among a colony of black ones and the intruders were promptly killed. He placed a few black ones in a colony of red ants and the new arrivals were promptly surrounded, marched out of the camp, compelled to load themselves with food and then were brought back enslaved. The black ants seem to have no propensity for making slaves of their enemies, but prefer to kill them, while the red ants never waste an enemy by destroying him. Although slaveholders, they are never idle, Prof. Bernard says. They keep slaves to increase their own store of food, but they themselves work as hard as the slaves.

A Problem in Mute Lovemaking.

From the Cincinnati Enquirer.

Paul Milliken, who is quite an expert in the language of deaf mutes, says that one morning last week he was coming down on the Avondale car, when he became interested in a discussion between two mutes.

"Say, I want your advice," said one of them, using his hands as vocal organs.

"I shall be happy to oblige you," said the other.

"Are you up on the tricks of women?" inquired the first one.

The second man modestly admitted that he knew something of the gentler sex, although he disclaimed being an oracle.

"Well," resumed the one who wanted advice "you know, I am in love with Mabel. That pretty little blonde, you know. At last I made up my mind to propose to her. Last night I made the attempt."

"And she turned you down?" eagerly inquired his friend, his hands trembling so with excitement that he stuttered badly.

"That is what I am coming to," said the first. "I don't know whether she did or not. You see, I was somewhat embarrassed, and the words seemed to stick on my hands. And there she sat, as demure as a dove. Finally my fingers clove together, and I could not say a word. Then Mabel got up and turned the gas down."

"Well?"

"Well, what is bothering me is this. Did she do that to encourage me and relieve my embarrassment, or did she do it so we could not see to talk in the dark, and so stop my proposal?"

INGERSOLL ON ORATORY.

THINGS THAT ARE NECESSARY FOR THE PUBLIC SPEAKER.

First, He Must Have Something to Say, and Then Must Say It Well—He Must Study Masterpieces of Literature—He Must Have Variety and Also Know When to Stop.

Col. Robert G. Ingersoll was asked the other evening to talk on the best way to succeed as an orator. The conversation was started by this question:

"What advice would you give to a young man who was ambitious to become a successful public speaker or orator?"

"In the first place," said Col. Ingersoll, "I would advise him to have something to say—something worth saying—something that people would be glad to hear. This is the important thing. Back of the art of speaking must be the power to think. Without thoughts words are empty purses. Most people imagine that almost any words uttered in a loud voice and accompanied by appropriate gestures constitute an oration. I would advise the young man to study his subject, to find what others had thought, to look at it from all sides Then I would tell him to write out his thoughts or to arrange them in his mind, so that he would know exactly what he was going to say. Waste no time on the how until you are satisfied with the what. After you know what you are to say, then you can think of how it should be said. Then you can think about tone, emphasis, and gesture, but if you really understand what you say, emphasis, tone, and gesture will take care of themselves. All these should come from the inside. They should be in perfect harmony with the feelings. Voice and gesture should be governed by the emotions. They should unconsciously be in perfect agreement with the sentiments. The orator should be true to his subject, should avoid any reference to himself.

"The great column of his argument should be unbroken. He can adorn it with vines and flowers, but they should not be in such profusion as to hide the column. He should give variety of episode by illustrations, but they should be used only for the purpose of adding strength to the argument. The man who wishes to become an orator should study language. He should know the deeper meaning of words. He should understand the vigor and velocity of verbs and the color of adjectives. He should know how to sketch a scene, to paint a picture, to give life and action. He should be a poet and a dramatist, a painter and an actor. He should cultivate his imagination. He should become familiar with the great poetry and fiction, with splendid and heroic deeds. He should be a student of Shakespeare. He should read and devour the great plays. From Shakespeare he could learn the art of expression, of compression, and all the secrets of the head and heart.

"The great orator is full of variety—of surprises. Like a juggler, he keeps the colored balls in the air. He expresses himself in pictures. His speech is a panorama. By continued change he holds the attention. The interest does not flag. He does not allow himself to be anticipated. He is always in advance. He does not repeat himself. A picture is shown but once. So, an orator should avoid the commonplace. There should be no stuffing, no filling. He should put no cotton with his silk, no common metals with his gold. He should remember that 'gilded dust is not as good as dusted gold.' The great orator is honest, sincere. He does not pretend. His brain and heart go together. Every drop of his blood is convinced. Nothing is forced. He knows exactly what he wishes to do—knows when he has finished it, and stops.

"Only a great orator knows when and how to close. Most speakers go on after they are through. They are satisfied only with a lame and impotent conclusion. Most speakers lack variety. They travel a straight and dusty road. The great orator is full of episode. He convinces and charms by indirection. He leaves the road, visits the fields, wanders in the woods, listens to the murmurs of springs, the songs of birds. He gathers flowers, scales the crags, and comes back to the highway refreshed, invigorated. He does not move in a straight line. He wanders and winds like a stream.

"Of course, no one can tell a man what to do to become an orator. The great orator has that wonderful thing called presence. He has the strange something known as magnetism. He must have a flexible, musical voice, capable of expressing the pathetic, the humorous, the heroic. His body must move in unison with his thought. He must be a reasoner, a logician. He must have a keen sense of humor—of the laughable. He must have wit, sharp and quick. He must have sympathy. His smiles should be the neighbors of his tears. He must have imagination. He should give eagles to the air, and painted moths should flutter in the sunlight.

"While I cannot tell a man what to do to become an orator, I can tell him a few things not to do. There should be no introduction to an oration. The orator should commence with his subject. There should be no prelude, no flourish, no apology, no explanation. He should say nothing about himself. Like a sculptor, he stands by his block of stone. Every stroke is for a purpose. As he works the form begins to appear. When the statue is finished the workman stops. Nothing is more difficult than a perfect close. Few poems, few pieces of music, few novels end well. A good story, a great speech, a perfect poem, should end just at the proper point. The bud, the blossom, the fruit. No delay. A great speech is a crystallization in its logic, an efflorescence in its poetry."

"I have not heard many speeches. Most of the great speakers in our country were before my time. I heard Beecher, and he was an orator. He had imagination, humor and intensity. His brain was fertile as the valleys of the tropics. He was too broad, too philosophic, too poetic for the pulpit. Now and then he broke the fetters of his creed, escaped from his orthodox prison and became sublime.

"Theodore Parker was an orator. He preached great sermons. His sermons on 'Old Age' and 'Webster' and his address on 'Liberty' were filled with great thoughts, marvellously expressed. When he dealt with human events, with realities, with things he knew, he was superb. When he spoke of freedom, of duty, of living to the ideal, of mental integrity, he seemed inspired.

"Webster I never heard. He had great qualities, force, dignity, clearness, grandeur; but, after all, he worshipped the past. He kept his back to the sunrise. There was no dawn in his brain. He was not creative. He had no spirit of prophecy. He lighted no torch. He was not true to his ideal. He talked sometimes as though his head was among the stars, but he stood in the gutter. In the name of religion he tried to break the will of Stephen Girard—to destroy the greatest charity in all the world; and in the name of the same religion he defended the fugitive slave law. His purpose was the same in both cases. He wanted office. Yet he uttered a few very great paragraphs, rich with thought, perfectly expressed.

"Clay I never heard, but he must have had a commanding presence, a chivalric bearing, a heroic voice. He cared little for the past. He was a natural leader, a wonderful talker—forcible, persuasive, convincing. He was not a poet, not a master of metaphor, but he was practical. He kept in view the end to be accomplished. He was the opposite of Webster. Clay was the morning, Webster the evening. Clay had large views, a wide horizon. He was ample, vigorous and a little tyrannical.

"Benton was thoroughly commonplace. He never uttered an inspired word. He was an intense egotist. No subject was great enough to make him forget himself. Calhoun was a political Calvinist—narrow, logical, dogmatic. He was not an orator. He delivered essays, not orations. I think it was in 1851 that Kossuth visited this country. He was an orator. There was no man, at that time, under our flag, who could speak English as well as he. In the first speech I read of Kossuth's was this: 'Russia is the rock against which the sigh for freedom breaks.' In this you see the poet, the painter, the orator.

"S. S. Prentiss was an orator, but, with the recklessness of a gamester, he threw his life away. He said profound and beautiful things, but he lacked application. He was uneven, disproportioned—saying ordinary things on great occasions, and now and then, without the slightest provocation, uttering the sublimest and most beautiful thoughts.

"In my judgment Corwin was the greatest orator of them all. He had more arrows in his quiver. He had genius. He was full of humor, pathos, wit, and logic. He was an actor. His body talked. His meaning was in his eyes and lips. Gov. O. P. Morton of Indiana had the greatest power of statement of any man I ever heard. All the argument was in his statement. The facts were perfectly grouped. The conclusion was a necessity.

"The best political speech I ever heard was made by Gov. Richard J. Oglesby of Illinois. It had every element of greatness, reason, humor, wit, pathos, imagination, and perfect naturalness. That was in the grand years, long ago. Lincoln had reason, wonderful humor, and wit, but his presence was not good. His voice was poor, his gestures awkward—but his thoughts were profound. His speech at Gettysburg is one of the masterpieces of the world. The word 'here' is used four or five times too often. Leave the 'heres' out and the speech is perfect.

"Of course, I have heard a great many talkers, but orators are few and far between. They are produced by victorious nations—born in the midst of great events, of marvelious achievements. They utter the thoughts, the aspirations of their age. They clothe the children of the people in the gorgeous robes of genius. They interpret the dreams. With the poets, they prophesy. They fill the future with heroic forms, with lofty deeds. They keep their faces toward the dawn—toward the ever-coming day."

TORTURE BY COMANCHES BROUGHT TO A SUDDEN CLOSE.

Flight of a Party of Cotton Smugglers in Texas in War Times Who Had to Look on While Indians Inflicted Agony on One of Their Number—Bill Whitehead's Shot That Ended It.

"It was in 1863 and 1864, when the civil war was the hottest, that I made some money smuggling cotton from Texas across the Mexican border," said David C. Develley of New Orleans. "Cotton was a scarce commodity in the world during the war, and England was bidding for all she could get. It could be bought on the plantations in eastern Texas and southern Arkansas for Confederate currency and turned into Mexican dollars at a high figure once it was safe across the Rio Grande. It was a risky business. San Antonio was the starting point of the cotton smugglers, and between there and the Rio Grande there was but one ranch. The Comanches, with no soldiers to be spared to keep them in order, were like devils at large, and the Confederate guerrilla bands were about as bad when they came upon a smuggling outfit with a show to capture mules and money. Then there were the Mexican customs officers to be bribed. But the profits were so great that we who were in the business took long chances, and those of us who didn't get killed, or didn't gamble away our money, mostly came out of it with big sacks of dollars.

"It was in May, 1864, that, with a train of six four-mule wagons bound for the Rio Grande with cotton, my outfit was jumped by the Comanches a hundred miles south of San Antonio. There were ten men of us all told, and seventy or eighty of the Comanches. We saw them in time and corralled our wagons, with the mules safe behind them, and stood the Indians off. But there was one man named Morton, a young fellow who had come along with our party for the sake of adventure, whom they captured. He had gone out for antelope and was a mile from the wagons when the Indians swooped down and cut him off. He ran for it and gave them a chase; but his horse tripped in a badger hole and threw him, and that settled his fate. He fought for his life and emptied a couple of Indian saddles, and as the Comanches closed round him we all prayed that he might be killed on the spot. But when the Indians scattered out and rode toward us we saw poor Morton among them astride a pony, his feet tied together under the animal's belly, with one of the Indians leading the pony by a lariat.

"We were kept pretty busy for about three hours, the Indians circling us, lying along their ponies' sides so as to show us no mark except a foot, and firing their guns and arrows from under the animals' necks. We were well protected by our wagons and none of us was hurt; and after we had killed four ponies and wounded an Indian or two the Comanches had enough of it and drew off. But they did not go away. They only went well out of rifle range, and then they stopped and cooked their supper, showing that they meant to stay with us longer. Before sunset they scalped poor Morton in full view of us, and an Indian rode toward the wagons parading the scalp on a lance.

"'There's worse coming for him to-night,' said old Crayton, our guide and hunter. 'They'll be up to extra devilment because of our having to be here to see it go on.'

"There was no possible way for us to rescue the captive from the Indians. From behind our barricade we could see them making their preparations to torture him. They gathered armfuls of last year's dried grass and buffalo chips before sundown, and stretched Morton upon his back on the ground, with his hands and feet tied to stakes. When darkness fell they built a fire upon his chest and held up torches of dried grass that we might see. His shrieks came to our ears and we could see his writhings by the light of the Indians' torches. Elsewhere it was pitch dark, for the night was cloudy and there was no moon.

"We endured this sight for a few minutes, and then one of our company could stand it no longer. The best shot in our outfit was Bill Whitehead, a Georgia mountaineer, who had found his way out upon the Texas plains to escape conscription in the Confederate Army at home. He could do wonderful shooting with a long, muzzle-loading rifle of the pattern known in the South as a buck rifle, and which carried a round bullet weighing twenty-four to the pound. He looked to the priming of his piece, laid his hat on the ground, and, without a word, began to crawl under a wagon out from the corral.

"'What are you going to do, Bill?' I asked.

"'You wait and see,' he answered, 'and if I don't come back—it's all right.'

"We had no men to spare where we were, and Bill was the best man among us—but I let him go, only saying:

"'Be careful, Bill. Don't go so far away that you can't get back.'

"He was out of sight in a minute, crawling away in the darkness through the long grass. Ten, fifteen, twenty minutes passed while we looked and waited. We could see the captive in his agony, and, between the Indians' yells, could hear his shrieks. Then somewhere near the Indians a flame spouted from the grass, and as the report of Bill's rifle came back to our ears the shrieking ceased suddenly and Morton lay still upon the ground. There was a commotion among the Indians, who for a few moments seemed completely rattled. By the light of the torches they dropped and the dreadful fire upon poor Morton's body we could see some of them firing toward the spot where the rifle had flashed, and others darting toward the place where their ponies were tethered. Their guns flashed nearer, arrows whistled toward the wagons, and we could catch the hoof-beats of ponies on the run toward us as Bill's tall figure loomed suddenly in the darkness and he fell breathless between two wagon wheels, still clutching his rifle. We pulled him into the corral, and then for a few minutes had a lively time beating off the Comanches, who were all about us, frantic with rage. An Indian will seldom give battle in darkness, always choosing an hour in which there is some daylight; but the Comanches were so furious that it looked at one time as if they would storm our barricade, in which case our show would have been a slim one. But they thought better of it and drew off, though twice again in the night they crept up through the grass and sent a flight of arrows into the corral. Bill was fighting, with the rest of us, at the end of the skirmish, and when it was over I asked him about his experience over at the Indian's camp.

"'I reckon I spiled their fun with Morton,' was all I could get him to say, and he never could be induced to utter another word on the subject.

"We looked for another attack from the Comanches in the early dawn, but with the break of day we saw that they had gone. Evidently they thought us 'bad medicine,' and safer to let alone. Some of us went over to where poor Morton was lying scalped, with the ashes of the fire upon his breast, and the hole clean through his body of a bullet that had passed through his heart. Bill Whitehead did not go with us to the place. We buried Morton and started on with the wagon train, reaching the Rio Grande without seeing another Indian. I gave Bill Whitehead a fine revolver in token of what he had done. He stayed with me until I got back to San Antonio, and would have gone with me on my next cotton smuggling trip, only I didn't make it. I had got enough of the country."

Saw Mr. Richardson Kill the Loons.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In your paper of April 1 is a communication from M. T. Richardson in regard to shooting two loons through the head from a boat on Squam Lake. I beg leave to say that the story is correct, as I was in the boat at the time and saw him do it. It is no great trick to shoot a loon, only one must bear in mind that distance on the water is very deceptive and that the loon is at least one-third to one-half further away than he looks to be. A loon has the power of sinking his body in the water until only his head and about three to four inches of his neck are above the water, and he keeps turning his head one way and another, continually watching for danger, so it is very rare that it is still in one position for any length of time.

A loon's head is a small mark, especially when turned oil from you, and one has to draw the sight very fine and hold still to hit so small an object so far away. If one is able to do this there is no more trouble in hitting a loon than in hitting anything else of the same size and at the same distance. I know it is an old saying that a loon will see the flash and dodge the ball, but that, like lots of other old and seemingly wise sayings, is not true. I have had a good many chances to see and prove it untrue in the last ten years, as I have taken out a good many parties to chase and shoot at loons. Every "chump" who fires at a loon whose ball strikes within ten feet of the loon and doesn't hit him swears the loon saw the flash and dodged under water. When a loon is only 150 to 200 feet away from the boat, with a rifle ball going at the rate of 1,000 feet a second, it is a remarkably quick dodger that can get under cover before the ball strikes the water near him. It may seem to the shooter that they get under cover at the flash, but one who stands watching the loon with a strong and powerful field glass knows better, for he can plainly see the ball strike the water before the bird goes under.

J. G. MORRISON.

ASHLAND, N. H., April 8.

Secret of Killing a Loon.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Concerning the loon: I was hunting on a New York lake last summer with an experienced, old-fashioned guide. We sighted some loons on the water and he remarked that they could dodge shot, and proved it by firing at them without success. I asked if he could get one for me and he replied that he could with his double-barreled gun. He fired one barrel—no loon in sight. The next instant the second barrel was fired at a near ripple on the water and the loon, shot to death, was picked up a moment later.

The alert bird had dived at the first shot, but the second charge reached him before he had got above water far enough to get his bearings and dive again.

NEW YORK, April 12. CHARLES W. PRICE.

CONVICTS GIVE CONCERTS.

ROUTINE OF CROW HILL PRISON LIFE ENLIVENED BY MUSIC.

For Two Hours on Two Nights a Week the Prisoners Are Allowed to Sing and to Play on Instruments—They Remain in Their Cells and the Music Goes by Haphazard.

This is the time of the year when the concerts in the Kings County Penitentiary are at their best. All the musical talent that is likely to be gathered in for some time is there, and has been there for some time, long enough to have fallen into place and be doing its best work. The talent in the penitentiary is by no means to be despised. It includes some of those who perform on Thespian boards at Coney Island and South Beach and other seaside places. They are not good enough for the vaudeville shows in towns, so they provide themselves with a winter home by exercising the amount of diplomacy necessary to get them into the prison.

In addition to these regulars, who are used to doing "turns" on a stage, there are others well able to hold their own with the present occupants of city boards, but who have got out of the everyday world by reason of certain vicissitudes. One of the regular institutions of the Kings County Penitentiary is the Thanksgiving Day concert. On some of these occasions amateurs from the church choirs in Brooklyn have helped out the convicts. The men in stripes used to look inscrutably grave and solemn at these Thanksgiving Day concerts. Concerts in the penitentiary began through a suggestion of Commissioner John H. Burtis of the Department of Charities and Correction, who thought that music would have a good effect. Commissioner Burtis had made a number of innovations, or attempted innovations, in the department, and Commissioner Henry, one of his Democratic coadjutors, was ready for him.

"What time should they have for playing and singing?" he asked.

"I should say once a week, one hour at a time."

"I would not agree to it," said Mr. Henry, with a great show of indignation; "that would be too small altogether. Make it twice a week, two hours at a time, and I will agree."

Mr. Burtis was considerably astonished to have the wind taken out of his sails in this fashion, but there was nothing to do but accept. Mr. Simis, then President of the board and now the sole Commissioner, voted for the measure and the concerts were started. These take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, lasting from 7 till 9 o'clock. There is no programme and no special arrangement. The convicts, shut in their cells, run all the events themselves. In doing this they display order, consideration, politeness, and taste. If one very good singer starts a very good song, the others keep silence unless there is a chorus.

The interior of the long-term prison has some advantages as a concert hall to an audience standing near the outer door, for the bare stone walls serve well in throwing the sound forward, but it seems very odd to hear all the voices coming from far and near and to see no one. The reporter had that experience the other evening in company with Deputy Warden James Tully and a couple of keepers. They constituted the audience at one of these concerts, unless the convicts who did not sing be counted. A very surprising thing was the up-to-dateness of men who have not been on the Bowery for over a year.

"One of the things the prisoners are most particular about is to get the latest songs," said Mr. Tully. "Their friends bring them."

The newest "coon songs" are not so very popular with the convicts. Mr. Gilbert is quite right about the gentle disposition which the burglar displays when he is not "a-burgling." Songs like "Don't Leave Your Mother, Tom," "A Lock of Mother's Gray Hair," "A Flower from Mother's Grave," and Harry Kennedy's "Old Fashioned Photographs," "Molly and I and the Baby," and "Empty Is the Cradle," are the ones that take. Songs about prisoners who are not guilty in spite of the evidence are very popular, and "Don't Send Him Away" is certain of an encore. The sentiment displayed seems to show that if the men in stripes had their way they would let the prisoners go and convict the complainants.

Another kind of song which has great vogue at these concerts is the old-fashioned ballad, or ditty which has been buried for fifty years or more, and about which the present generation knows little. On the Thursday before Christmas, at the evening concert, a weird voice, singing alone in an expectant silence rendered the old ballad of the "Mistletoe Bough," telling the story of the fair young bride who, when playing hide and seek on her wedding night, disappeared. No trace of her was found for many years, though the castle where the wedding had taken place was searched from top to bottom. The ballad concludes:

> At length an old chest that had long lain hid
> Was found in the castle; they raised the lid,
> And a skeleton form lay mouldering there,
> In the bridal wreath of that lady fair.
> Oh, the mistletoe bough! Oh, the mistletoe bough!

This song has a tune that suggests a gusty wind blowing over an ice plain on a dark night. Sung in the semi-darkness of the great prison, it sounded so mournful that it produced a general shudder in the invisible audience.

Songs that came from remote parts of the old country by way of the steerage nearly a hundred years ago, and have since been handed down from father to son, come out at these concerts. Such is the ancient ballad of Saddle-de Monroe, and the song that informs all that "the ship is ready and the wind doth blow, and I'm bound for the sea, Mary Ann, Mary Ann." Old-fashioned sea songs are common and popular. The legend of Tom Pepper has its devoted bards. The first verse goes like this:

> "Oh, 'twas in the midst of an action, we were firin' away like fun,
> And round and grape and cannister shot were sweeping every gun;
> Oh, after the fight we mustered hands and a stranger mustered too;
> For although he stood upon the deck he was not one of the crew.
> Singin', Ri tiddy fol-lol, tol-lol, tol-lol, &c.
>
> "Hullo," says our Captain, "from where do you hail, and how did you come aboard?"
> But there he stood and scratched his head and never said a word,
> That from the bow gun of the enemy's ship I saw that beggar come flyin'.
> Singin', Ri tiddy fol-lol, tol-lol, tol-lol, &c.

The stray English Jack who introduced Tom Pepper made a great hit with it, and since his regretted departure for other scenes of triumph it has remained one of the stock songs.

Here's a fragment of another favorite song of the sea:

> My true love was an Irish girl, from Liverpool she came.
> Oh, she tore up all her petticoats, saying, "I'll make mittens if I can,
> For I can't see my love a-freezin' on the Banks of Newfoun'lan'."

The "Come All Ye's" are in great number and variety. They include many beginning "Come all, ye fair maidens," "Come all, ye young lovers," "Come all, ye true patriots," and many others. "Wearing of the Green" is sometimes sung, but Orange songs are distinctly tabooed. The one case of hissing that has developed at any of these concerts happened about six months ago when a rash young man undertook to sing about the glories of King William of "Glorious, Pious and Immortal Memory," at the "Battle of the Boyne."

The old-fashioned negro melodies are favorites. There is a prisoner from South Carolina, a colored man with a deep voice, who sings "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia," "Old Kentucky Home," "As We Sang in the Evening by the Moonlight," "Ella Ree," &c. He evokes the finest chorus singing that is heard within the prison walls. "Home, Sweet Home" is another thing that draws out the full strength of the choir, and the last number on the programme is usually "Uncle Jim's Christmas Hymn," which has the refrain of "Rock of Ages" running through it. All the prisoners who have voices join in this.

But vocal music does not constitute the whole concert. The prisoners have among them about forty instruments of various kinds. There are three concertinas, five violins, four flutes, a violoncello, and any number of harmonicas, besides several banjos and a guitar. Some of the instruments have been made by the prisoners themselves.

Deputy Warden Tully was a companion of Ned Harrigan when Harrigan was a youth in the old Ninth ward of New York. They were both ship calkers in those days, and Ned made for California in the early days of the gold excitement there. Harrigan began his stage career in California, and at first met with many tokens of disapprobation in the shape of oakum balls. He could neither sing nor act and his audiences guyed him. But he had the spirit of his old home in him and said: "Ye sons of guns, I'll act if ye kill me for it." After a while he improved so much that men could listen without being seized with a desire to commit murder. Mr. Tully, who kept in touch with Harrigan, when the day of his triumph came gave him many an idea for the farce comedies with which he convulsed New Yorkers for so many years. Tully is, therefore, in his element at the concerts, and says that they have very considerable merit.

The concerts don't seem to injure discipline at all, and they certainly do improve the spirits of the men. About this time last year, by reason of the idleness in the penitentiary, there began an epidemic of despondency among the prisoners, apparently on account of lack of employment. It was noticed that those prisoners who were chief among the singers did not suffer at all. The one exception to this rule was William McGlory (no relation to the famous McGlory), and he had had fits of insanity at various times before. He was a would-be murderer and suicide, but when he was taken away to Matteawan he enlivened the journey by singing "Just tell them that you saw me."